

Marine Corps University / Command and Staff College

Lesson Title: Inventory Assessment

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“The most important six inches on the battlefield is between your ears.”

General James N. Mattis, USMC

1. Introduction

Professional Military Education (PME) should not be an episodic focus area, but part of a lifelong commitment to learning about your profession. You are about to embark on a ten-month, in-residence academic opportunity that will capitalize on both the operational experiences and the PME investments you have made over your career. To frame expectations and to serve as a point of departure before the formal start of the academic year, each college and school at Marine Corps University will conduct a PME inventory assessment.

Command and Staff College (CSC) will utilize this assessment to establish a baseline of knowledge about each student. For academic year 2015-16, the assessment will include five short answer questions that focus on a variety of subjects described in the assigned readings, and one short essay on a topic addressed in the U.S. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, *Warfighting*. The results of your assessment will be discussed during your initial counseling sessions with CSC faculty. In an effort to prepare for this assessment, each student is directed to read and be familiar with the texts and publications listed below, focusing on the indicated pages. For your convenience, these documents are provided on the CSC website. In addition to the titles of the assigned readings, below you will also see a number of “Issues for Discussion.” Use these issues for discussion as a means to focus your reading.

2. Required Readings

- a. Richard Paul and Linda Elder, “Critical Thinking; Concepts and Tools”, Foundation for Critical Thinking Press, 2009. (23 pages-read all)
- b. USMC, “Warfighting”, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, June 1997. (96 pages-read all)
- c. USMC, “Expeditionary Force 21”, Marine Corps Capstone Concept, March 2014. (45 pages, read all)
- d. Victor H. Krulak, “First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps.” (read Chapter 1 & 2, pages 16-66, 49 pages total)

3. Issues for Discussion

- a. What are the correlations between the discussion on critical thinking and the elements of the theory of war as described in *Warfighting*?
- b. What are the themes and key aspects of the Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1?
- d. What are the principal themes of *Expeditionary Force 21*? Do they complement the Marine Corps tenants of preparing for and conducting war as described in *Warfighting*?
- e. What are some of the key challenges for the Marine Corps during a transformational era outlined by LtGen(Ret) Krulak?
- f. What were the key points that ensured the Marine Corps’ survival during the inter-war period?

4. Coordinating Instructions

CSC leadership will discuss this assessment during “Welcome Aboard” presentations on 5 Aug 15. Your faculty advisors will provide further guidance on the administrative details with regard to how the assessment will be administered.